CHAP. XIII.

SOME INSTANCES OF THE FOLLY WHICH THE IGNORANCE OF WOMEN GENERATES; WITH CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS ON THE MORAL IMPROVEMENT THAT A REVOLUTION IN FEMALE MANNERS MIGHT NATURALLY BE EXPECTED TO PRODUCE.

THERE are many follies, in ſome degree, peculiar to women: ſins againſt reaſon of commiſſion as well as of omiſſion; but all flowing from ignorance or prejudice, I ſhall only point out ſuch as appear to be particularly injurious to their moral character. And in animadverting on them, I wiſh eſpecially to prove, that the weakneſs of mind and body, which men have endeavoured, impelled by various motives, to perpetuate, prevents their diſcharging the peculiar duty of their ſex: for when weakneſs of body will not permit them to ſuckle their children, and weakneſs of mind makes them ſpoil their tempers—is woman in a natural ſtate?

SECT.

SECT. I.

ONE glaring inſtance of the weakneſs which proceeds from ignorance, firſt claims attention, and calls for ſevere reproof.

In this metropolis a number of lurking leeches infamouſly gain a ſubſiſtence by practiſing on the credulity of women, pretending to caſt nativities, to uſe the technical word; and many females who, proud of their rank and fortune, look down on the vulgar with ſovereign contempt, ſhew by this credulity, that the diſtinction is arbitrary, and that they have not ſufficiently cultivated their minds to riſe above vulgar prejudices. Women, becauſe they have not been led to conſider the knowledge of their duty as the one thing neceſſary to know, or, to live in the preſent moment by the diſcharge of it, are very anxious to peep into futurity, to learn what they have to expect to render life intereſting, and to break the vacuum of ignorance.

I muſt be allowed to expoſtulate ſeriouſly with the ladies who follow theſe idle inventions; for ladies, miſtreſſes of families, are not aſhamed to drive in their own carriages to the

door